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ICOM NatHist Meeting Jacobstad, Finland 14th – 17th June 2005
- Adrian Norris

Twenty-three members and associates, from 11 countries, including China, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, as well as many members of the European Union, attended the meeting, which was held at the Arctic Museum, Nanoq. A wide range of papers and presentations were presented which covered the themes **Man & Nature in the Arctic; Tangible and Intangible Natural Heritage; Conservation: indoor and outdoor and Exhibitions & News from museums**. Abstracts of the papers presented and, in some cases the full text, can be found on the ICOM NatHist website at:
<http://www.icom-nathist.de/icom/>

A number of interesting facts and pieces of general information were passed on to members which, I felt, deserved a wider audience. One such piece of information came from Olivier Retout of Belgium who introduced the CASTEX programme, which is a co-operative venture between Brussels, Leiden and Paris to produce joint touring exhibitions. Research into the demand for exhibitions across 87 natural history museums throughout Europe came up with the staggering statement that 285 touring exhibitions are produced per year in the EU. **The question has to be asked, why do we in Britain see so few of these touring exhibitions?**

Discussing problems of controlling pests in museum galleries, Tilman Haug of Germany came up with the idea of installing insect light traps inside the Emergency Exit lights within the gallery spaces. These lights, kept on all the time, proved to be a very successful and inexpensive way of controlling flying insects within gallery spaces, in particular the cabinet beetle *Trogoderma angustum*. This is a simple, and inexpensive, way of solving a problem, which could be of benefit to many museum galleries within Britain.

The group also visited the museum exhibitions at Nanoq, Jacobstad City Museum and the Geological Uplift displays on the island of Kopmanholm, as well as visiting the City of Nykarleby with its wooden church dedicated to St Birgitta and the water tower café with its panoramic views of the surrounding forest.

The excursions included a full day visiting various islands within the archipelago in the Gulf of Bothnia and visits to the boreal coniferous forest and peat bogs, finishing with an elk-meat stew sponsored by the Hunting Society of Nykarleby. This walk through the forest highlighted the richness of the lichen flora in a clean environment.

The ICOM NatHist AGM established a new Working Group with myself as the co-ordinator with the title of **“The Working Group on the Art of Taxidermy and its Cultural Heritage Importance”** This working group is to report back to ICOM NatHist at the ICOM Triennial Conference to be held in Vienna in 2007. I would be very pleased to receive any input into this from members of the museums community within Britain.

The next annual meeting of ICOM NatHist will take place in India in 2006.

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Members of ICOM NatHist with the symbol of the Arctic Museum Nanoq, Jacobstad, Finland



Members of ICOM NatHist around an Elk "salt-pole" in the boreal forest near Nykarleby, Finland